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treatment of the American economist, Daniel Raymond, to whom, following Sherwood, he ascribes considerable influence on List and the whole protectionist movement in America. Englishmen will certainly object to his devoting just three lines in his volume of over five hundred pages to Senior, whereas seven pages are devoted to Bastiat. In the main, however, the book is well proportioned.

Professor Rambaud is not a member of the historical school, although he tries to be just to their views. That he does not always succeed, is apparent in his arguments on pages 331-333 and on page 346. He correctly regards Ihering as the real exponent of the historical school in jurisprudence, and takes his arguments as the starting point in the discussion. He objects to the theory of social evolution as portrayed, because it ends in a blasphemy; and he takes exception to the theory of economic materialism, because he thinks that it would involve the triumph of socialism — both of them arguments of the weakest kind. The work is surprisingly free from misprints, to which we have unfortunately become accustomed in French books. We have, however, noticed several — such as “Denham Steuart” (page 126), “Harward” University in various places, and a curious confusion between General Walker and his father on page 343. There we read: “We must not confound this Amasa Walker with his father, Francis Amasa Walker (1799-1875), Deputy, Senator and Secretary of State of the United States.” Not only has Professor Rambaud got father and son mixed up, but the father held his positions, not under the Federal government, but under that of the State of Massachusetts. Notwithstanding these and other minor defects, the work of Professor Rambaud is, on the whole, a solid and respectable performance: it is not only the best of its kind in France, but also possesses some advantages in the way of arrangement and contents over anything that we yet have in English or German. That it nevertheless does not yet constitute a really adequate history of economics need scarcely be added.

E. R. A. SELIGMAN.

Die Feldgemeinschaft in Russland. Ein Beitrag zur Sozialgeschichte und zur Kenntniss der gegenwärtigen wirthschaftlichen Lage des russischen Bauernstandes. Von WLADIMIR GR. SIMKHOWITSCH. Jena, Gustav Fischer, 1898. — xv, 399 pp.

This book of Mr. Simkhowitsch will be read with great benefit by every student of the economic history and the modern conditions of Russia. The author lays no claim to originality, but he has set before himself the task of exhausting in one volume the entire litera-

ture of the subject, in which he appears to be perfectly at home. He takes a live interest in his subject; and, while very impartially quoting all opinions, he evidently leans towards the Marxian school, which has within the last decade been rapidly gaining ascendancy in Russia, especially among the younger generation of students. To the reader who is not familiar with the Russian language, this volume will prove of invaluable assistance in bringing the subject up to date and thus supplementing the great work of Dr. von Keussler. It will also bring the reader within the range of the economic discussion now engaging the minds of the more advanced native Russian thinkers.

There is only one point in the book on which I should take issue with the author—namely, upon the origin of the Russian village community. As regards this question, a distinct change of public opinion has recently taken place in Russia. When, about twenty years ago, Professor M. Kovalevsky ventured the opinion that the Russian village community was bound to share the fate of its predecessors, the German *Mark* and the village communities of other Western nations, he was decried in the Russian periodical press and was almost ostracized by the “populists” or “peasantists” (in Stepniak’s terminology). The village community was to the populist the sacrosanct heritage of Russian history, the emanation of the Russian national spirit, the palladium of the growing Russian communism. Statistical investigation has, nevertheless, vindicated the views of Professor Kovalevsky. The dissolution of the village community, which was feared by the populists as the greatest national calamity, is hailed by the Marxists as the starting point of social and economic progress. As frequently happens in controversy, however, the Russian Marxists seem to have gone to the other extreme, in making the old theory of Professor Tchitcherin almost a canon of their faith. With him the village community is merely a creation of the Russian administrative genius, originating in the Russian method of taxation, which made the entire population of a township jointly and severally responsible for the prompt payment of taxes by all its members. As all the taxes were assessed by the village community upon the land, in most cases absorbing and often exceeding the entire rental value of the land, it followed that land ownership was somewhat in the nature of a *privilegium odiosum* and was apportioned as a public burden among the entire working population of the township. Thus, the village community owed its existence to fiscal necessity.

It seems strange, *a priori*, that this view can be reconciled with the theory according to which the economic condition of a country is the

primary factor of social life, which gives shape to political institutions as well as to political ideas. Here it would seem, on the contrary, that one of the most far-reaching economic institutions was the creation of the Russian administration. This theoretical discrepancy should not, however, prevent a scholarly mind from accepting the view advocated by the author, although it would rather tend to upset the accepted theoretical foundation of the Marxist *Weltanschauung*. What is really of interest to the student is the decision as to whether that theory is borne out by facts. If we follow the history of the village community in Northern Russia, in Little Russia, in the Southwestern steppes, in Siberia and in Central Russia, we find the development of land ownership among the peasantry to have been everywhere substantially the same. It began with the patriarchal family, embracing two, three, and often four generations, living together in the same household. Under the then prevailing methods of production, the dimensions of this communistic household could not outreach certain limits. Time would come when it would split up into a few smaller households, comprising three or four married brothers or cousins with their families. The land would then necessarily be apportioned among the divided families. In the course of time, some would emigrate and abandon their settlements, some would transfer them to newcomers; and thus, within two or three generations, the system of land tenure would become quite complex. The title to the land would be derived from the common ancestor of the holders or their grantors. As no limits were set by the community to the transfer of land plots from one holder to another, the observer is tempted to see in it the beginnings of private ownership.

One feature, however, must not be lost sight of — namely, that through all these changes of possession it was not the land itself, not a particular plot of land, but the interest in the joint estate which was transferred from one holder to another. It was thus evidently a case of joint ownership based upon common ancestry, actual or fictitious. It was amidst such conditions of joint tenure that the Russian government introduced its system of taxation, with responsibility *in solido* resting upon all the joint tenants of a given holding. It was quite natural, therefore, that numerous lawsuits should arise over the partition of these joint possessions among the joint tenants. With the lapse of time and change of possession, and in the absence of records, it was very difficult to trace the title to the original assumed ancestor; and thus the authority of the government was invoked. The latter would almost invariably decide in favor of a uniform divi-

sion of the land by the polls, in conformity with the prevailing system of taxation. Thus, we read in a Russian official communication, dating as far back as 1786:

Justice requires that, since the peasants bear equal burdens of taxation, they should enjoy equal shares of the land possessions; it must be considered inevitably necessary to equalize the land shares, especially wherever the peasantry depend exclusively upon agriculture, in order that on the one hand they should thereby be enabled to pay their taxes without arrears, and, on the other hand, in order to pacify the peasant with smaller holdings.

We further learn that, in so acting, the Russian government merely expressed the sentiment of the poorer classes of the peasantry, who were in the majority. It follows from what has here been said that, in the first place, the primitive form of ownership known to the Russian peasantry was not a species of private property, but was distinctly a form of joint tenure, based originally upon the ties of kin and modified in the course of time, with the advent of new settlers, by the territorial element of neighborhood. This condition of ownership formed the material basis of the Russian system of taxation, with its joint and several liability of the taxpayers. The Russian administrative genius, like Antæus, drew its inspiration from contact with the soil. It furthermore appears that, when the relation of land tenure became more complicated, the Russian government merely acted in response to the desires of the majority of the peasantry. It was not, then, a case of enlightened absolutism stamping the dictates of its wisdom upon the economic institutions of the country, but just the reverse: the government, guided by the wishes of the majority of the peasant population, merely gave legislative expression to the class antagonism which had in the course of time arisen within the village community.

We think that the author and those who share his opinions take too narrow a view of the village community, in confining it solely to one form of division of land. Professor Kavelin seems to us to have understood better the true nature of the village community, in laying no particular stress upon the mode of distribution of land, which rests in the discretion of the community as its supreme owner and adapts itself to circumstances and conditions. So long as land is abundant, no limits are set to individual occupation of it by members of the community. But as soon as land becomes scarce, the community asserts the right which has always resided in it. It was not, then, the particular fiscal system, but the growth of population, that effected the gradual changes in the system of distribution of land in Russia.